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THE CORRELATION OF SOCIOLOGY, HISTORICAL AND DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

USSR

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THE CORRELATION OF SOCIOLOGY, HISTORICAL AND DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

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The article by Yu. Kuchinskiy entitled "Sociological Laws," published in Voprosy Filosofii, No 5, 1957, has brought many responses. This is because the article touched not only on the question of the correlation of sociology and historical materialism, but inevitably raised the problem of the correlation of sociology and dialectical materialism, and, in the final analysis, raised the problem of the subject or substance of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, inasmuch as the article presupposed a definite concept of historical materialism and its place in the circle of philosophical disciplines. In itself, the article by Yu. Kuchinskiy, as a consequence of the unclear portions in it, could not serve as a basis for discussion. It did, however, serve as a stimulus to discussion. In the articles written in response to it, there are certain definite and varied conceptions of the place of the philosophy of Marxism in the system of sciences, and consequently, varied conceptions of what its substance is; these conceptions are not always precisely stated, but nevertheless serve as the necessary premises in the authors' deliberations.

It should be emphasized that, at present, arguments over the substance of Marxist philosophy have also arisen outside the boundaries of the Soviet Union, particularly in Poland. The solution of this question is inevitably bound up with important conclusions, starting with the determination of a position with regard to Soviet philosophical science and ending with the problem of the relationship of philosophy to the social struggle. The question, then, is not only a matter of principle, but has in fact acquired very immediate practical significance.

The correct solution of the question of the correlation of sociology and historical materialism demands a precise answer to the question of the substance of historical materialism, and correspondingly,

of dialectical materialism. Errors in resolving the latter question inevitably affect the resolution of the former. In this connection, we must take a small excursion into the past, and it is hoped that the expediency of the digression will subsequently become apparent.

In 1953 a textbook entitled Dialekticheskiy Materializm, under the editorship of G. F. Aleksandrov, was published. This book contained a number of unclear postulates relating to the Marxist concept of the substance of philosophy. It was stated that dialectical and historical materialism, as opposed to other sciences, study the world as a single, interconnected whole, but it was not explained how Marxist-Leninist philosophy differs from the sum of those sciences of nature and society. Incidentally, it is obvious that dialectical materialism does not simply sum up those sciences, but has its own specific subject or substance.

In this textbook, one encountered repeated references to the existence of a basic question of philosophy, but this question was not posed in connection with the idea of philosophy as the perception of the world as a whole. The concept of philosophy as a science whose basic question is the question of the relationship of consciousness to existence, hence, philosophy as a world-view or Weltanschauung /mirovozreniye/ in the deeper sense of the word, was placed on the same level as the idea of philosophy as a composite survey of the world /obozreniye mira/. In Dialekticheskiy Materializm, it was not indicated with sufficient precision that philosophy as the science of the more general laws of the development of nature, society, and human cognition is not the equivalent of the totality of individual sciences; nor is it equivalent to a "survey" of them. As a consequence of this, the book's concept of the substance of the philosophy of Marxism approached /Herbert/ Spencer's concept of the tasks of his philosophy.

Spencer, proceeding from his metaphysical methodology and regarding the basic question of philosophy as insoluble, wrote: "Giving the definition of philosophy its simplest and clearest form, we would say that the lowest order of knowledge is ununified or non-synthetic knowledge, that science is partially unified or partially synthesized knowledge, and that philosophy is fully unified or synthetic knowledge." /Footnote: H. Spencer, Osnovnyye Nachala (Basic Fundamentals), SPb (St. Petersburg), 1886, p 6. Emphasis mine. — I. N./ The distinction between philosophy and other sciences is here purely quantitative, according to the degree of unification of "synthesis" of knowledge. (We will not mention in any detail another fault of the Spencerian concept of philosophy which reduces knowledge to mere knowledge of phenomena and not knowledge of essence.) It would seem that the distinction between the Marxist concept of the substance of philosophy and Spencer's should be obvious, but in an article by W. Kraewski entitled "Concerning the Substance of Marxist

"Philosophy and Other Disputed Questions" we read: "Spencer's method is very close to the method of dialectical materialism..." *Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 2 (5), 1958, p 177.*

In reaction to the errors of the textbook Dialekticheskiy Materializm, an opposing but no less erroneous viewpoint had some currency in several Moscow higher educational institutions in 1953-1955. According to this viewpoint, philosophy allegedly has no special nature but is one of the special sciences, namely, the science of the specific laws of human cognition, in other words, a science of the subjective dialectic. According to this viewpoint, historical materialism is excluded from the body of philosophy and is regarded as a non-philosophical special science of society.

The view of dialectical materialism contained in the textbook mentioned above extinguished the qualitative difference between philosophy and other sciences, and consequently it also extinguished the distinction between historical materialism as a philosophical science and sociological disciplines. From this point of view, views developed as to the subject of historical materialism as a generalizing science of social life without the appropriate disclosure of the specific features of historical materialism as a philosophical science. Thus, for example, it has been said that "the subject of historical materialism is... the interrelationships of all aspects of social development." *Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii, No 3, 1957, p 54.* Based on a view like this, it is difficult to refute the opinion that historical materialism is allegedly the generalization of, or even the sum total of component sociological disciplines. What is the criterion which distinguishes historical materialism from the other social sciences? Is it only in the degree of generalized applicability of the phenomena being studied? And if historical materialism is a philosophical science, how is it to be expressed in the determination of its subject?

An attempt was made to solve the question of the distinction between historical materialism and other social sciences by Yu. Kuchinskiy in his article entitled "Sociological Laws." But the criterion which would prevent the content of historical materialism from being identical with Marxist political economy and other social sciences was wrongly postulated by Kuchinskiy. Sometimes Kuchinskiy includes the laws of the correspondence between social consciousness and social life among the laws of historical materialism. *Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii, No 5, 1957, p 95.* which in itself can cause no objection. But sometimes he suddenly transfers the law of relationships in society between basis and ideological superstructure into the purview of sociology as a science, where the latter is distinguished from historical materialism by its own subject (p 96) and thus deprives historical materialism of its main content. One is forced to think that the author considers the life of society and basis to be phenomena which not only do not coincide, but do not even intersect.

One of the reasons for the glaring inconsistencies in the conclusions of Yu. Kuchinskiy consists in the fact that he uses the concept of "consciousness" (soznaniye) in more than one sense. Sometimes, without any warning, he speaks of consciousness as a mere psychic phenomenon, located beyond the boundaries of the "social sphere," and then his definition of historical materialism as a science which "examines the relationships between the sphere of society as a whole and the spheres of nature and thought" (p 95) is transformed into the definition of a science which studies the role of the psychology of the individual in social life, the changes in the psyche of the subject in social conditions and the influence of geographical environment of the life of society, and also the changes in the natural environment under the influence of the development of society. It should scarcely be necessary to show that no Marxist could possibly agree to such a narrowing of the subject of historical materialism.

Not everything in Yu. Kuchinskiy's article was erroneous. His opinion that, in defining the subject of historical materialism, we must analyze the types of relationships among phenomena with which it is concerned raises no objection. It is also true that sociological disciplines have a more sectional character than historical materialism. This is a necessary prerequisite for the understanding of historical materialism, as is apparent in the example of the definition of Marxist-Leninist philosophy in the book Dialekticheskij Materializm is insufficient for an understanding of the nature of philosophical science. However, the role and the position of the sociological disciplines in the system of knowledge are defined in such a way by Yu. Kuchinskiy that one gets the idea that sociology is supposedly independent of historical materialism, inasmuch as "sociology is a completely independent science" (p 96). This leads to un-Marxist conclusions.

In an article by 3 authors entitled "Historical Materialism and Sociology," Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii No 5, 1958; Compare Der Dialektische Materialismus und der Aufbau des Sozialismus, Berlin, 1958, p 98 ff/ a good criticism of Yu. Kuchinskiy's article is given, but the positive conception advanced by the authors seems to us not to have been thought through to the end. They call historical materialism a "universal sociological theory." Historical materialism, they say "examines the general laws and the forms in which they manifest themselves in various socio-economic formations." Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii, No 5, 1958, p 154/ One thing remains unclear: may one in this case consider that a universal sociological theory, by virtue of its own universality, is in fact a philosophical science? The authors believe that a specific sociological theory is an application of the laws of historical materialism to individual socio-economic formations. For example, they say, there is the sociology of capitalist society,

which examines, among other things, the questions of the relationship between society's actual life and society's consciousness in the framework of capitalism. If historical materialism is a philosophical science (the authors by no means question this), but specific socio-logical disciplines are not a part of philosophy, then it follows that philosophical and non-philosophical sciences differ only in the degree of generalization of the phenomena studied, and with this the authors no doubt disagree, since it obscures the specific nature of philosophical study.

We would automatically come to the conclusion that if we follow the view outlined above, we would have to admit that within the framework of philosophy itself there is a part which is "more philosophical" (dialectical materialism) and a part which is "less philosophical" (historical materialism), since the latter, according to the degree of universality of the laws which it studies, stands at a lower level than the former, for the laws studied by the former deal with "the general laws of development of specific socio-economic formations," and not with those of objective reality as a whole. Obviously, it is also impossible to agree with this. Karl Marx's discovery of the materialistic understanding of social life was a turning-point in all philosophy and had a colossal revolutionary significance.

On the other hand, it seems that historical materialism automatically includes the universal laws of development of all social phenomena, which take place in all formations: population movements, relationships between tribes and between nations, wars, etc. If one is to be consistent, these laws must also be considered philosophical laws, although it is hard to understand what they are supposed to contain that is philosophical.

It seems to us that the line taken by V. V. Kolbanovskiy in his article "On the Substance of Marxist Sociology" is not quite true. [Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii, No 8, 1958.] He correctly opposes the distinction between sociology and historical materialism proposed by Yu. Kuchinskiy, and in this connection he makes a number of valuable contributions. But in opposition to this, Kolbanovskiy postulates the complete identity of sociology on the one hand, and historical materialism as a universal science of society on the other hand. [Footnote: Voprosy Filosofii, No 8, 1958, p 129.] The question of the philosophical character of historical materialism seems to have been decided on in such a way that philosophy has become a subordinate part of historical materialism, being one of the sciences of social consciousness. In other words, the author regards philosophy, for the most part,

merely in the sense of historical-materialistic explanation of the reasons and laws of the historical development of philosophical studies, i.e., as a kind of historical-materialistic introduction to the history of philosophy.

There is a certain amount of rational sense in this, because it was only the materialistic understanding of history, discovered by Marx and Engels, which explained the sense of philosophical creativity and the succession of numerous philosophical theories which have occurred in the history of philosophy; it explains why, in the course of millenia, the 2 opposing camps of materialism and idealism remained and still remain the main law of philosophical development. It is therefore natural that any textbook of historical materialism include as one of its subdivisions ("The Forms of Social Consciousness") an examination of philosophy as an ideological phenomenon. Only from the standpoint of historical materialism can one explain and disclose the whole profound significance of the great revolutionary turningpoint in philosophy made by Marx and Engels.

But historical materialism is itself impossible without dialectical materialism, which presents the general philosophical prerequisites and basic features of methodology to historical materialism as a component part of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Therefore, dialectical materialism and historical materialism play the role of "metosciences" with respect to each other; in other words, they are sciences which provide the theoretical basis and explanation of another science; each is conditioned by the other. This is fully supported by instances from the history of the formation of Marxism; dialectical and historical materialism formed simultaneously and developed amid very close mutual influences. Marx, in his "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," presented simultaneously the postulates of both dialectical and historical materialism. A similar instance occurs in "The Holy Family" and "German Ideology."

If, in examining the relationship of historical materialism to sociology, we do not shed enough light on the aforementioned aspect of the mutual relationship of historical and dialectical materialism, then we will lose sight of the problem of the philosophical character of historical materialism itself and the question of its relationship to sociology will get oversimplified treatment.

We believe that it is also impossible to agree with the decision of the question of the relationship between historical materialism and sociology which results from the views developed in the book by V. P. Tugarinov entitled Sootnosheniye Kategoriy Istoricheskogo Materializma (The Correlation of the Categories of Historical Materialism), 1958.

Tugarinov, believing that historical materialism is one of the philosophical sciences, but is at the same time "Marxist sociology" (p 10), is of the understanding that historical materialism is, as it were, comprised of 2 elements: the philosophical element and the special sociological element. He writes: "Here, the boundary between the 2 aspects of historical materialism lies along the line of distinction between the philosophical category and the sociological category of historical materialism. If historical materialism (istmat) contains in itself only sociological categories ... then historical materialism would be simply sociology, a special science of society" (p 14; emphasis mine. — I.N.). Thus, the author considers sociology to be something other than philosophical science, but at the same time, he agrees that historical materialism is scientific sociology. The way out of the given contradiction by way of regarding historical materialism as consisting of 2 differing "aspects" or elements seems to us to do violence to the quality of historical materialism as a single science, a science which, as V. I. Lenin said of Marxist theory as a whole, seemed poured of a single chunk of steel.

Let us now dwell on the question of how to decide the problem of the substance of historical materialism [raised] in articles by modern Polish philosophers. In Poland, quite a bit is being written on this theme.

In the brochure by L. Kolakowski entitled "World-View and Daily Life," the following definition of the substance and subject of philosophy is given: "Philosophy's task is the construction of a whole picture of the world, a picture which is important for the formation of men's social principles." [Footnote: L. Kolakowski, Swiatopoglad i Zycie Codzienne, Warsaw, 1954, p 14.] As is later explained, by "social principles" is meant principles of morality (moral'). Kolakowski considers it necessary to subordinate the whole process of the further development of philosophy to the goal of forming these principles of morality. This same idea is advanced by him in an article entitled "On What Does Philosophy Live?" [Footnote: L. Kolakowski, "Zczego zyja Filozofowie?", Nowa Kultura, No 3 (303), 1956.] Kolakowski is attracted not by that solution of the problem of the relationship of philosophy to the life of society given by Karl Marx, but to that given by B. Spinoza. However, Kolakowski is not a Spinozist, although for him, the question of the relationship of consciousness to life is not devoid of significance, the question ceases to be the basic question of philosophy in Kolakowski's system of views, and thus is unlike that in Spinozist philosophy. This question has been transformed, in Kolakowski's system of views, exclusively into a prerequisite for the solution of moral dilemmas, and plays the role of handmaiden. The scope of phenomena in which philosophy is interested is determined, according to him, only by

the importance of these phenomena for the formation of moral principles.

Footnote: L. Kolakowski, Swiatopoglad ..., p 15; Cf. his book entitled Jednostka i Nieskonczosc, Warsaw, 1958. In accordance with this position, the very process of cognition is subject to moral evaluation: If philosophy is engaged in cognition of the world, it is so only with the goal of providing foundations for certain moral norms, and only that cognition which insures the achievement of these norms is of philosophical significance.

Kolakowski even goes so far as to oppose the moral function of philosophy to its cognitive function. He writes: "The component parts of the world which are examined by philosophical perception do not attract that philosophical perception for the reason that knowledge of them is essential to perfect man's ability to be dominant over nature, but for the reason that knowledge of them sheds light on the formation of relationships among people as social entities." Footnote: L. Kolakowski, Swiatopoglad ..., pp 23-24. Kolakowski considers philosophy to be "anthropocentric" science; he considers the essence of philosophy to be moral anthropology.

It cannot be said that this point of view is distinguished by any especial newness, or that it belongs to Kolakowski alone. The "anthropological" interpretation of Marxism has had a certain currency in recent years in both Poland and Germany. Revisionists, Existentialists, and neo-Thomists have engaged in it. Anthropologism now represents, not one of the imperfect forms of the expression of materialism, but an idealistic mythologization of the relationship of man to environment.

Footnote: See T. I. Oyzman, "The Falsification of the Philosophical Teachings of Marx from the View of Irrationalism," Voprosy Filosofii, No 3, 1958. In the book by the neo-Thomist Jacob Hommes entitled Der Technische Eros. Das Wesen der Materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung (The Technical Eros. The Essence of the Materialist Understanding of History). In this book, the anthropological distortion of the views of the young Marx were developed in detail and joined to the Catholic teaching on the moral answerability of man to God. From Hommes' viewpoint, the "true" understanding of Marxism, based on the works of the young Marx, consists in seeing in it "the philosophical essence which was also alive in the majority of other contemporaries and functions even in the depths of Christian theology, the teaching that technology is a form of Eros, i.e., the teaching on man's direct and active relationship to the world." Footnote: Jacob Hommes, Der Technische Eros... Freiburg, 1955, pp 6-7.

The direct relationship of man to the world is understood to mean the creation of social environment by means of the creative emotions of the human psyche which are disclosed from without. Thus arises "the ecstatic (akstatische) unity of human art and the natural reality of life,

Footnote: Jacob Hommes, Der Technische Eros... pp 6-7. The "erotic" relationship of man to environment, according to Hommes, lies at the base of moral evaluation, and the subject of social philosophy is the psychology of individuals as subjects of creativity and objects of moral analysis. The philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism has allegedly "demonstrated its own inability" to show suffering humanity the way out of its earthly unhappiness and suffering; this way out is shown, according to Hommes, by neo-Thomism, by its social teachings, and by the Catholic ethics which comprise its foundation.

L. Kolakowski is an opponent of Catholicism. He advocates not Catholic ethics, but "worldly" ethics. But the surprising thing is this: that which he says about the tasks of Marxist philosophy can, without much difficulty, be made to coincide with the line of thought of a Catholic philosopher. From his words, it follows that both dialectical and historical materialism may be replaced by moral teachings. Whether one sees in this a transition by Kolakowski to the position of "ethical socialism" or to the position of anthropological irrationalism, it must be admitted that no matter how we finally characterize him, the solution by Marx and Engels of the question of the subject of philosophy has nothing in common with the views of Kolakowski. As regards sociology, everything in it which is not subject to moral evaluation and does not lead to the formation of moral evaluations has nothing to do with philosophy according to him; sociology is then the content of special disciplines which develop on an independent empirical basis. In accordance with this view, the editors of the new philosophical journal in Poland called Studia Filozoficzne (whose chief editor is L. Kolakowski), included among the social problems subject to philosophical elucidation only problems of morals, esthetics, and "theory of culture." Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 1, 1957, p 3.

The views of Z. Bauman lead to similar results. Bauman, in his article entitled "On Overcoming the Disintegration of Marxist Philosophy," believes that the subject of Marxist philosophy is analysis of the relationship of man to socially determined environment. Footnote: Mysl Filozoficzna, No 6, 1956, p 135. Not the relation of consciousness to life or subject to object, but the relationship between subject and "environment" — this is what Z. Bauman understands to be the basic question of philosophy. Dialectical materialism "integrally" dissolves, in historical materialism, the starting and terminal point of which is the problem of human individuality (lichnost'). Like Kolakowski, Bauman believes that "the sense of scientific discoveries, from the standpoint of world-view, has for Marxist philosophy only this practical importance, that it must consider and make the object of its research the rich matrix of problems of the social results of these discoveries." Footnote: Mysl Filozoficzna, No 6, 1956, p 136. Philosophy, according to Z.

Bauman, "must answer the basic social-moral questions of the age" Footnote: Mysl Filozoficzna, No 6, 1956, p 137; emphasis mine. — I. N., and not study the universal laws of the development of objective reality. Therefore a theory of materialism as such pertains only to natural science and allegedly has no philosophical character. It is not surprising that Z. Bauman categorically opposes the understanding of historical materialism as the result of the extension of dialectical materialism to the study of social phenomena.

These conclusions have been found convenient both by the positivists, who are at war with "ontological" philosophy in general, and by the advocates of the anthropologization of historical materialism, who view sociology as an independent, empirical, descriptive science. If the subject of historical materialism is believed to be the "social-moral" essence of man, then the subject of sociology is the various "facts" of social life which permit of external observation. The starting points for the development of historical materialism and sociology are, according to this concept, completely different. Historical materialism is replaced by the psychology of the soul and sociology by creeping "factography."

V. Krayevskiy disputes the views of Kolakowski and Bauman regarding the subject of philosophy. In his article entitled "On the Subject of Marxist Philosophy and Other Disputed Questions," Krayevskiy comes to the defence of the theory of materialism as a philosophical teaching. It the theory of materialism "studies the different offshoots of development of matter and of the types of motion connected with it, and also the relationship between these two." Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 2, 1958, p 174. Historical materialism is a philosophical science. It is closely connected with dialectical materialism, being the extension of the latter to the field of the phenomena of social life. Regarding sociology, the author sees the role of historical materialism to be the "theoretical foundation of both sociology and the historical sciences." Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 2, 1958, p 181. In V. Krayevskiy's article, unfortunately, these postulates are mingled with erroneous ones. For example, he alleges that V. I. Lenin, in his book, Materializm i Imperiokrititsizm, equated the subject of philosophy with gnosiology. Krayevskiy here loses sight of the fact that in this work Lenin was primarily interested in problems of the theory and method of cognition because it was precisely in this field that Machism was attempting to do battle with materialism, declaring empiriocritical philosophy to be a method of construing the "elements of the world" into a system. It is not without significance that even E. Mach asserted that "there is no philosophy of Mach, but there is something more; there is his natural-science methodology and psychology of cognition." Footnote: E. Mach, Poznanie i Zabluzhdenie (Cognition and Confusion), Moscow, 1909, p 3.

Criticism of the methodology of Machism naturally demanded that it be opposed by the methodology and the theory of cognition of Marxism.

In addition to several obvious errors, V. Krayevskiy's article was characterized by the fault that the correct postulates in it were not developed fully enough and left much unclear. An article by B. Bachko entitled "Crypto Problems and Historism" appeared in 1958 as an answer to Krayevskiy's article. Bachko's article is very instructive in many respects. It deserves detailed treatment.

There is no disagreement with Bachko when he says the following questions should be distinguished: (1) What did the classical writers of Marxism believe the subject of their philosophy to be? (2) Regarding various philosophers who considered themselves Marxists, what has been and is the subject of their theoretical researches? (3) How should they (if indeed they should) change the direction of their researches? We note, however, that the second question pertains, to a considerable degree, to the problems of the history of Marxist philosophy, and the solution to the third question, in the final analysis, depends on the solution to the first question, inasmuch as we, as Marxists, believe that "in following the path of Marxist theory, we will approach closer and closer to objective truth (without ever exhausting it); in following any other path, however, we cannot arrive at anything except confusion and lies." *[Footnote: V. I. Lenin, Sochineniya, Vol 14, p 130.]*

Let us see how Bachko develops his observations further. In the quarrel between the proponents of a reduction of the philosophy of Marxism to a theory of cognition — we emphasize immediately that this reduction deprives historical materialism of its philosophical character even if its role is not reduced, moreover, to that of social gnosiology, which is also incorrect — and the opponents of that reduction, Bachko took the position of complete neutrality. He believes that both sides can cite appropriate statements by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and that therefore, both these viewpoints have the right to be considered Marxist. *[Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 3, 1958, p 83.]*

Bachko, evidently does not see the difference between these 2 questions: (1) are theoretical discussions permissible among Marxist philosophers, and (2) should we or should we not strive for a single and unambiguous solution of disputed questions? A negative answer to the second question is profoundly incorrect, but that is exactly what follows from the line of thought of B. Bachko. This answer leads to sanctioning the pluralism of truth, which is not acceptable to Marxism. Bachko is quite wrong in his ironical treatment of Marxists who say that "in actuality, there can exist only one 'authentically Marxist' solution of a problem." *[Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 3, 1958, p 85.]* But how could it be otherwise?

Of course, truth is not attainable in the twinkling of an eye, and the unambiguous solution to disputed questions is not easily grasped. It is also true that it would be wrong to seek, in the works of the classic writers of Marxism-Leninism, ready answers to every newly arising theoretical question. But, if there are no ready answers, that does not mean that the path to the solution of this or that specific philosophical problem is not outlined at least roughly by the content and by the whole spirit of Marxist philosophy. Bachko refers to the statement of Engels in his letter to I. Blokh, dated 21-22 September 1890, that in various periods of the development of Marxism, he, Engels, and Marx did not always give certain minor aspects of the historical process their "just due" in the theoretical struggle. Bachko concludes from this that Marxism was characterized by "one-sidedness" during the course of its historical development. Footnote: Studia Filozoficzne, No 3, 1958, p 81. But did the predominant application of emphasis in the polemical works of Marx and Engels signify a "one-sidedness" in their theoretical views? It is not insignificant that Engels, in the same letter, said further, "but as soon as we proceeded with the depiction of any historical period, that is, as soon as we began practical application the state of affairs changed, and at that point there could be no mistake whatever." Footnote: K. Marks and F. Engel's, Izbrannyye Pis'ma, 1953, p 424. Bachko, however, considers it a fact that the founders of Marxist philosophy had "one-sided" theoretical views on, of all things, the subject of that philosophy, one-sided in the sense that their statements on this score in various works contradict each other.

But this does not correspond to reality. Let us examine the question in its essence.

It is true that in Anti-Duering, Engels spoke of the dialectic and of philosophy as a whole in the sense of a science "of the universal laws of movement and development of nature, of human society, and thought." Footnote: See F. Engel's, Anti-Dyuring, 1957, p 133. On the other hand, Engels declared that "out of all previous philosophy, one thing retains its independent significance, the study of thought and its laws — formal logic and dialectic. All the rest is included in the positive sciences concerning nature and history." Footnote: Anti-Dyuring, 1957, p 25. But does this mean that, in the first case, Engels understood Marxist philosophy only as the most universal world-viewing science, and in the second case, only as a special science of cognition?

Of course not. In the second of the 2 quoted statements from Engels, the subject was the disclosure of the rational kernel which should be left from the old philosophy in the process of criticizing it, and this "kernel" does not reduce merely to a method and theory of cognitive thought. "There remains only the dialectical method of thought

and the understanding of everything in the natural, historical, and intellectual world, as a world which is endlessly moving, changing, and in a constant process of development and destruction. Footnote: Anti-Dyuring, 1957, pp 23-24; emphasis mine. — I. N. In other words, the "understanding of the whole world," i.e., a world-view (theory of life), and method are 2 sides of a single scientific philosophy. All Marxist-Leninist philosophy has a methodological significance, including historical materialism, but this does not contradict the extraction of a special teaching on method and theory of knowledge from it.

Let us return to Bachko's article. When the author so calmly refrains from opposing the exclusion of a theory of life from Marxist philosophy, it is only of benefit to the positivists. Incidentally Bachko himself believes (and evidently regards it as favorable) that, in the next few years, Marxism will be subjected to "the influence of the positivist style of thinking," since Marxist logicians at present are engaged in working out a logical semantics, founded in the past by logicians, the majority of whom were neo-positivists (R. Carnap, A. Tarskiy, and others). But is the creation of a logical semantics really the gift of neo-positivism as a philosophical movement? It is known that the semantic conception of truth in its narrowly logical interpretation has played a progressive part in science; it has, however, in the expanded philosophical interpretation of neo-positivism, led to a false treatment of the process of cognition.

"The positivist style of thinking," which Bachko considers permissible, leads to the liquidation of historical materialism as a science and to its replacement by empirical sociology. Otto Neurath once attempted to interpret Marxism as a whole as a narrow empirical sociology. Footnote: See Otto Neurath, "Die Soziologie im Physikalismus," Erkenntnis, Vol 2, Nos 5-6, 1931, pp 419, 422.

We think that Bachko would not desire such a result.

Bachko concludes his article with the expressed wish that Marxist philosophy would make an historical approach to its own past, analyzing the social secrets of the various stages of its history. We note in this connection that it would be useful to find the social secret of that "criticism" of Marxism which serves as the subject of the article we are examining, where the author waxes ironical over the "conception... which makes out of Materializm i Empiriokrititsizm a kind of paragraph in the statute of the party in the field of philosophy." Footnote: Studia Filozoviczne, No 3, 1958, p 88. There is no doubt about it, we have diametrically opposed views on this question! This work of V.I. Lenin, written exactly a half century ago, has in our day not only not lost a single iota of its theoretical significance. On the contrary, this very day it plays a colossal role in the criticism of neo-positivism,

which is one of the main opponents of Marxism in ideology. The book is, of course, not to the liking of the adherents of positivism. Therefore, they strive to take a "special" position in the evaluation of this philosophical Leninist work.

It should be noted that the tendency toward a positivistic distortion of the subject of Marxist philosophy is characteristic of many revisionists. The example of K. Kautskiy is well known. A. Bogdanov in his article entitled "What Should the Russian Reader Seek from Ernst Mach?" which preceded the Russian edition of Analiz Oshchishcheniy (Analysis of Sense Perception) in 1908, wrote that Marxists should learn from Mach a revolutionary approach in the destruction of old concepts of philosophy with the aim of "merciless destruction...of idols," i.e., the "idol" of materialism. The modern revisionist, Max Lange, has gone so far as to assert that Engels allegedly defended "a philosophical position akin to positivism" in Anti-Duering. Footnote: M. Lange, Marxismus-Leninismus-Stalinismus, Stuttgart, 1955, p 80. He is seconded by the Thomist, Wetter.

There is nothing more erroneous than the assertions outlined above. Actually, Marxist-Leninist philosophy is a unity of the theory of materialism and the revolutionary dialectic method. Since it is a unity of objective and subjective dialectic, it is the most universal of all sciences; at the same time, it is a science which has specific tasks. An indication of the specific nature of philosophy is contained in Engels' formulation of the fundamental question of philosophy: its specific nature consists in that it studies the genesis of the subjective as the product of developing matter, and it studies the specific laws of cognition and transformation of reality by the social subject. The old philosophers, Marx wrote, only explained the world, but the real task consists in transforming it. The relationship of objective to subjective, as V. I. Lenin pointed out, is the broadest and most universal of all relationships. Therefore the basic question of philosophy, which is a question specific in quality, is at the same time extremely broad; it has a general, i.e., a world-outlook character. This fully corresponds to the conception of philosophy as the science of the most general laws of the development of material reality. Thus the subject of dialectical materialism is the most general laws of the development and cognition of objective reality, laws which disclose the mutual relationship of matter as primary and cognition as secondary, the latter being produced from the former.

The question of the relationship of social life to social consciousness is that form of basic philosophical question which is characteristic of historical materialism as a philosophical science.

It is the basic question of historical materialism. "If materialism in general explains consciousness from life, and not the reverse, then materialism, in application to the social life of mankind, required the explanation of social consciousness from social life." (Footnote: V. I. Lenin, Sochineniya, Vol 21, pp 38-39.)

The conception of historical materialism as a part of Marxist philosophy provides the key to the solution of the question of its relation to sociology. The laws of the dialectical development of production ("the matter of society"), which lead to the appearance of social consciousness, the laws of the correlation of basis and superstructure, and consequently even the laws of social revolutions — these are organic parts of the content of historical materialism. On the other hand, just as dialectical materialism does not include study of the laws of development of separate natural-scientific aspects of the division of matter (these are studied by the physico-mathematical, chemical, biological and other disciplines), so historical materialism does not study the laws of component social phenomena (the national question, war, family relationships, population movements, etc). The study of component social phenomena (component in the sense that they are not a direct expression of the mutual relationship of social life and the social consciousness proceeding from it) is the subject of various subordinate sociological disciplines. This does not mean that historical materialism ignores examination of these phenomena. Examination of these phenomena is vital for the all-sided research of socio-economic formations from the position of historical materialism. But special study of these phenomena is not its direct task.

Thus, "sociology in general," in the Marxist conception, as distinguished from historical materialism, does not exist. But there do exist subordinate sociological (not philosophical) disciplines. It is known that V. I. Lenin sometimes called historical materialism the only scientific sociology. This should be understood in the sense that historical materialism is the philosophical-methodological basis of sociological disciplines. In view of the special features of Marxist philosophy elaborated above, historical materialism is in fact the study of the more general laws of social development, i.e., the philosophical-theoretical base of sociological disciplines. Subordinate sociological disciplines differ from historical materialism not in the sense that they represent its application to separate socio-economic formations which follow and replace each other in the course of history (the viewpoint noted above). If this were indeed the case, historical materialism would include only that theoretical content which can quite equally be applied to all socio-economic formations which is untrue. Actually historical materialism and indeed dialectical materialism, are a unity of the general and the specific.

Subordinate sociological disciplines do not have a philosophical character. They differ from historical materialism in that they study various co-existing, but not basic aspects of social life; even though these aspects are found in all or several formations (appearing in these formations, of course, to an unequal degree).

Controversies over the subject or substance of any science flare up whenever there are attempts to place in doubt the direction maintained by its researches theretofore. Controversies over the subject of historical and dialectical materialism (namely in this case the discussion of the relationship of historical materialism to sociology) have not quieted down in recent years primarily because there are people in other countries za rubezhom who have cast doubt on the general-theoretical (i.e., philosophical) nature of historical materialism as a science. This is the essence of the matter. The dilemma concealed behind these controversies is this: either historical (and dialectical) materialism, or empirical sociology (and philosophical positivism). L. Wittgenstein in a recent book entitled Philosophical Researches (1953), reduced the subject of philosophy to philological analysis of words used in language. Modern revisionists such as A. Malewski Footnote: See Studia Filozoficzne, No 2, 1957. reduce the subject of theoretical science in society to description of empirical facts. Behind it all is the basic dilemma: either Marxist theory, or bourgeois and petit-bourgeois ideology, which is frightened of revolutionary theory and strives by every means to separate philosophy and sociology from politics. There can be no doubt as to which path will be taken by those persons who genuinely want to be or become Marxists. The intermediate position in the philosophical-sociological bog, is of use only to enemies of Marxism.

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